

Senate File 547 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 547
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 304)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to applicant priority and grant award amounts
2 under the teach Iowa scholar program.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 261.110, subsections 2 and 4, Code 2021,
2 are amended to read as follows:

3 2. An Iowa resident or nonresident applicant shall be
4 eligible for a teach Iowa scholar grant if the applicant
5 meets all of the criteria specified under, or established in
6 accordance with, subsection 3. Priority shall be given first
7 to applicants seeking to renew their grant awards and who
8 continue to meet the original priority criteria under which
9 such applicants' first awards were received; then to applicants
10 who are graduates of approved practitioner preparation
11 programs, by academic year, with the most recent academic year
12 graduates given priority; then to applicants who are minority
13 persons and residents of Iowa; then to applicants who are
14 residents of Iowa. A person is ineligible for this program if
15 the person receives a forgivable loan under section 261.111 or
16 loan forgiveness under section 261.112. For purposes of this
17 section, "minority person" means the same as defined in section
18 15.102.

19 4. A selected applicant who meets all of the eligibility
20 requirements of this section shall be eligible for a teach
21 Iowa scholar grant for each year of full-time employment
22 completed in this state as a teacher for a school district,
23 charter school, area education agency, or accredited nonpublic
24 school. A teach Iowa scholar grant shall not exceed ~~four~~ seven
25 thousand five hundred dollars per year per recipient. Grants
26 awarded under this section shall not exceed a total of ~~twenty~~
27 thirty-seven thousand five hundred dollars per recipient over
28 a five-year period. If a selected applicant has received a
29 federally guaranteed Stafford loan under the federal family
30 education loan program or the federal direct loan program,
31 a federal direct plus loan, or a federal Perkins loan, the
32 selected applicant may elect to have the commission make
33 payment under the program directly to the selected applicant's
34 student loan holder.

35 Sec. 2. Section 261.110, subsection 3, paragraph b, Code

1 2021, is amended to read as follows:

2 *b.* The applicant is preparing to teach in fields including
 3 but not limited to science, technology, engineering, or
 4 mathematics; English as a second language or special education
 5 instruction; ~~or~~ is preparing to teach in a hard-to-staff
 6 subject as identified by the department; or is preparing to
 7 teach in a school district in which more than ten percent of
 8 the students enrolled are minority persons. The department
 9 shall take into account the varying regional needs in the state
 10 for teachers in these subject areas when applying the criterion
 11 of this paragraph. The department shall annually identify
 12 and designate hard-to-staff subjects for the purpose of this
 13 paragraph. The eligibility of an applicant who receives a
 14 teach Iowa scholar grant and who is preparing to teach in a
 15 hard-to-staff subject as identified by the department shall
 16 not be affected in subsequent years if the department does not
 17 continue to identify that subject as a hard-to-staff subject.

18 EXPLANATION

19 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
 20 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

21 This bill modifies the teach Iowa scholar program, under
 22 the college student aid commission, to give first priority
 23 to applicants seeking renewal of their grant awards, then
 24 to applicants who are graduates of approved practitioner
 25 preparation programs, then to applicants who are minority
 26 persons, with subsequent priority to residents of Iowa, and
 27 raises the annual grant limitation from \$4,000 to \$7,500 and
 28 the total grant limitation over a five-year period from \$20,000
 29 to \$37,500. Currently, priority is given to residents of Iowa.
 30 Currently, the Code section establishing the program directs
 31 the commission to establish eligibility criteria that includes
 32 but is not limited to criteria listed in the Code section.
 33 The bill adds to the list of criteria that an applicant is
 34 preparing to teach in a school district in which more than 10
 35 percent of the students enrolled are minority persons.